

Patron Behavior Policy

Policy Statement

The Brandon Township Public Library ("Library") is open for specific and designated civic, educational, and cultural purposes. In order to provide resources and services to all people who visit the Library in an atmosphere of courteous, respectful, and excellent service, the Library Board has adopted this Patron Behavior Policy. The purpose of the Patron Behavior Policy ("Policy") is to assist the Library in fulfilling its mission.

The following rules of conduct shall apply to all buildings -interior and exterior – and all grounds controlled and operated by the Library ("Library Property"), and to all persons entering in or onto Library Property, unless otherwise specified.

Rules for a Safe Environment

- A. Violations of Law. Committing or attempting to commit an activity in violation of federal, state, or local law, ordinance, or regulation (including but not limited to assault, indecent exposure, larceny, vandalism, or copyright infringement) is prohibited.
- B. Weapons. Carrying firearms, or other weapons, except as specifically permitted and exempt from local regulation by law, on Library Property is prohibited.
- C. Alcohol / Drugs. Possessing, selling, distributing, or consuming any alcoholic or intoxicating beverage, illegal drug, or drug paraphernalia is prohibited. Alcohol may be permitted at certain Library-sponsored events if specifically approved by the Library. Persons noticeably under the influence of any controlled substance or alcoholic or intoxicating liquor are not allowed on Library Property.
- E. Recreational Equipment and Personal Transport Devices. Unless used for transportation, use of skateboards, rollerblades, roller skates, or other wheeled forms of recreational equipment (including toys that can be ridden or wagons) are not allowed in the Library or on Library Property. Library patrons must park bicycles or other recreational vehicles only in authorized areas. Wheelchairs, scooters, and other power-driven mobility devices are permitted inside by those individuals with disabilities in accordance with Library rules unless a particular type of device cannot be accommodated because of legitimate safety requirements. (See Americans with Disabilities Act Policy)
- F. No Blocking of Doors, Aisles, or Entrances. All doors, aisles, and entrances must remain obstacle-free. This includes a prohibition of running power cords across aisles or other areas that are used for walking.

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- G. Animals. Animals are not permitted in the Library other than service animals (as defined by law) for those individuals with disabilities, those used in law enforcement or for Library programming. Animals may not be left unattended or be off-leash on Library Property.
- H. Incendiary devices. The use of incendiary devices, such as candles, matches, and lighters, is prohibited inside the Library.
- I. Staff Only Areas. Patrons shall not be permitted in any designated staff or employee-only areas unless permitted by the Library.
- J. School Groups. School groups using the Library must have the approval of the Library Director or designee and must have a teacher and other appropriate staff present to ensure that the students use the Library in conformance with these rules.

Rules for Personal Behavior

- A. Personal Property. Personal property brought into the Library is subject to the following:
 - 1. The Library staff may limit the number of parcels carried into the Library. The Library may also limit the size of items, for example, the Library prohibits large items such as suitcases, duffle bags or large plastic garbage bags. Items must be small enough to fit under a chair at the Library.
 - 2. The Library is not responsible for personal belongings left unattended and Library staff is not permitted to guard or watch personal belongings.
 - 3. The Library does not guarantee storage of personal property.
 - 4. Personal possessions must not be left unattended or take up seating or space if needed by others.
- B. Food and Beverages. Food and beverages are only permitted in designated areas.
- C. Unauthorized Use. Patrons must leave the Library Building promptly at closing time and may not be in the Library when it is not open to the public. The Library does not permit overnight parking in the Library's parking lot unless authorized by the Library Director or designee. Further, any patron whose privileges to use the Library have been denied may not enter the Library or be on Library Property. Any patron whose privileges have been limited may not use the Library in any manner that conflicts

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with those limits placed on the patron by the Library Director, their designee, or the Library Board.

- D. Engaging in Proper Library Activities. Patrons shall be engaged in activities associated with the use of the Library while in the building or on Library Property. Patrons not engaged in reading, studying, writing, participating in scheduled Library programs, or using Library materials shall be required to leave the Library and shall not remain on the Library Property. This includes sleeping on Library furniture, the floor, or outside on Library Property.
- E. Considerate Use. The following behavior is prohibited in the Library or on Library Property:
1. Spitting
 2. Running, pushing, shoving, fighting, throwing items, provoking a fight or other unsafe physical behavior
 3. Climbing on furniture
 4. Using obscene or threatening language or gestures
 5. Engaging in sexual behavior (1) that is a violation of the law, (2) which can reasonably be expected to disturb Library users or staff while such staff or patrons are in the Library or on Library property, or (3) that interferes with the Library patrons' use of the Library or the ability of the staff person to do his or her job.
- F. Interference with Staff. Patrons may not interfere with the staff's performance of duties in the Library or on Library property. This includes engaging in conversation or behavior that monopolizes or forces the attention of staff for an inappropriate period, inappropriate personal comments, sexual advances, or physical and/or verbal harassment.
- G. Panhandling or Soliciting for Money, Products, and Services. Panhandling or soliciting Library staff or patrons for money, products, or services inside the Library or on Library property is prohibited. Sales of products or services that are incidental to Library programming may be permitted if approved in advance by the Library Director.
- H. Campaigning, Petitioning, Interviewing and Similar Activities. As a limited public forum, the Library reserves the right to regulate the time, place, and manner for campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey-taking, pamphleteering, canvassing and soliciting on Library grounds as follows:

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1. Campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey-taking, pamphleteering, canvassing, and soliciting are prohibited inside the Library building.
 2. Campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey-taking, pamphleteering, canvassing, and soliciting outside the Library building but on Library property are subject to the following requirements:
 - a. Persons or groups are required to check in with the Library Director or their designee in advance.
 - b. Use of the Library property does not indicate the Library's opposition or endorsement of the candidate or issue that is the subject of the petition, interview, campaign or discussion.
 - c. Permitted areas for campaigning, petitioning, interviewing, survey-taking, pamphleteering, canvassing and soliciting outside of the Library building shall be limited to the areas 25 feet from all entrances.
 - d. No person shall block ingress or egress from the Library building.
 - e. Permitted times will be limited to the operating hours of the Library.
 - f. Campaign material, literature or petitions may not be brought into the Library, posted at the Library or left on Library property.
- I. Sales. Selling merchandise on Library Property without prior permission from the Library Director is prohibited.
- J. Distributions; Postings. Distributing or posting printed materials/literature on Library Property not in accordance with Library policy is prohibited.
- K. Restrooms. Misuse of restrooms, including laundering, sleeping, excessive personal grooming, and sexual activity is prohibited. Unless a parent or guardian is assisting a child or a patron is assisting a person with a disability, there shall only be one person in a stall. Library materials may not be taken into restrooms.
- L. Harassment. Staring, photographing, video recording, audio recording, following, stalking, harassing, arguing with, threatening, talking or behaving in a manner: (1) which can reasonably be expected to disturb Library users or staff while such staff or patrons are in the Library or on Library property; (2) that interferes with the Library patrons' use of the Library or the ability of the staff person to do his or her job ~~is prohibited~~; (3) would create or may result in a hostile work environment for Library staff; and/or (4) that violates the law is prohibited.
- M. Loud Noise. Producing or allowing any unreasonably loud, or disturbing noises that interfere with other patrons' use of the Library or which can be

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reasonably expected to disturb other persons or have the intent of annoying other persons, including yelling, cheering, talking (with others or in monologues) or noises from electronic, entertainment, and communication devices, such as cell phones, tablets, headphones, and radio, is prohibited. Patrons may use headphones or earbuds but at a volume that cannot be heard by other Library patrons or staff.

Adults may read aloud to children in the Youth Area, provided that they are reading in a voice that would not reasonably disturb others.

- N. Odor. Offensive odor, including but not limited to, body odor due to poor personal hygiene, overpowering perfume or cologne, or odors from items brought into the Library, that cause a nuisance is prohibited. (For example, if the patron's odor interferes with staff or other patrons' use of the Library, the patron violates this Policy).
- O. Phones. Those patrons desiring to use phones to place or receive calls must use the phones quietly so as not to disturb other patrons. Phones should be placed on silent or vibrate mode upon entering the Library.
- P. Library Policies. Patrons must adhere to all Library Policies.
- Q. Identification; Masks. Patrons must provide identification to Library staff when requested. A mask (excluding those for medical purposes), hood, or device by which any portion of the face is so hidden, concealed, or covered as to conceal the identity of the wearer is prohibited on Library Property, except for persons wearing head covering or veils pursuant to religious beliefs or customs.
- R. Tables or Structures on Library Property. No person may use or set up a table, stand, sign or similar structure on Library Property. This does not apply to Library-sponsored or co-sponsored events.
- S. Smoking; Tobacco or Marijuana Use. Smoking, using e-cigarettes, vaping, electronic nicotine delivery systems or chewing tobacco is prohibited on Library Property. Using, smoking or possessing marijuana on Library Property is also prohibited.
- T. Attire. All patrons are expected to be fully dressed, including shoes and shirt, at all times while on Library Property. Visible or damp swimming suits left uncovered are not considered to be appropriate attire. No bras or sports bra tops allowed without a proper full shirt over the top. No one with uncovered undergarments will be permitted on Library Property.

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Rules for the Use and Preservation of Library Materials and Property

- A. Care of Library Property. Patrons must not deface, vandalize, damage, or improperly use or improperly remove Library materials, equipment, furniture, or buildings. Patron shall not load or install any programs or software on Library computers. Patrons shall not cause damage by returning books containing bedbugs or bringing bedbugs into the Library. Patrons shall be responsible for reimbursing the Library for costs incurred by the Library for violating these provisions.
- B. Internet Use. Patrons must abide by any time limitations and all other provisions of the Public Computer and WIFI Policy.
- C. Equipment. Library staff computers are for staff use only.
- D. Authorized Lending. Library materials may only be removed from the premises with authorization through established lending procedures.
- E. Use of Tables and Computers. Number of people seated at a table should not exceed the number of chairs regularly in place.

Violation and Appeal Section

The Library Director or the Director's designee may restrict access to Library facilities with immediate dismissal of the patron from the premises, by suspending the patron's access to Library facilities for a set period of time, or by denying access to specific services and/or programs pursuant to this Policy. When necessary, the local police may be called to intervene.

- A. Incident Reports. Library staff shall record in writing in the form of an Incident Report any violation of this Policy that resulted in a verbal warning or a suspension of Library privileges. By the end of the day on which the incident occurred, an Incident Report shall be written and forwarded to the Library Director for logging and review. The report should include physical descriptions in addition to the name of the patron. A copy of the suspension of privileges letter should be attached, if applicable.
- B. Violation of the Policy – Suspension of Privileges. Unless otherwise provided in this Policy, (see Section C below), the Library shall handle violations as follows:
 - 1. *Initial Violation:* Library patrons observed violating this Policy will be asked to cease the violation with a verbal request. If the patron does not comply with the request, he or she will be asked to leave the building for the day. If he or she refuses, the police may be called.

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2. *Subsequent Violations*: The Library Director or the Library Director's authorized designee may further limit or suspend the patron's Library privileges if infractions continue. Such limitation or revocation shall be in writing and specifying the nature of the violation. Subsequent violations of the same rule shall result in additional suspensions of increasing length.
- C. Violations that Affect Safety and Security. Violations involving verbal abuse, violence, threatening behaviors, sexual harassment, vandalism, drug sale or use or attempted drug sale or use, intoxication, theft or attempted theft, physical harassment, sexual misconduct, or any behavior that threatens the safety and security of staff and/or patrons shall be handled as follows:
1. *Initial Violation*: The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. Violations of this nature will result in an immediate minimum two-week suspension of Library privileges to give the Library sufficient time to investigate the incident. After the investigation is completed, the Library Director or their designee may add additional time to the initial limitation or suspension period.
 2. *Subsequent Violations*: The police will be called immediately. If the conduct constitutes a violation of local, state, or federal law, arrest or criminal prosecution may ensue. The Library Director or the Library Director's authorized designee may further limit or suspend the patron's Library privileges in escalating responses, which will be documented in writing. Subsequent violations of the same rule will result in additional suspensions of increasing length.
- D. Reinstatement. The patron whose privileges have been limited or suspended shall attend a meeting with the Library Director or the Library Director's designee to review the Library Patron Behavior Policy before their privileges may be reinstated. The Library Director may impose conditions for the reinstatement.

Right of Appeal

Patrons may appeal (1) a decision to limit or suspend privileges or (2) the conditions placed on reinstatement by sending a written appeal to the Library Board President within ten (10) business days of the date of the decision. The Library Board will meet to review the appeal within sixty (60) days. The decision of the Board shall be final and will be reported to the Complainant within ten (10) business days of the meeting.

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